

VZCZCXR07675

RR RUEHBZ RUEHDU RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHLU #1233/01 3281137

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

R 241137Z NOV 06

FM AMEMBASSY LUANDA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3499

INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0064

RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 0328

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS

RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE//ECJ5-J8//

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 LUANDA 001233

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL PGOV MARR AO

SUBJECT: GENERAL WARD PROPOSES BILATERAL WORK PLAN TO
INCREASE MILITARY COOPERATION

REF: A. LUANDA 1137

1B. LUANDA 1135

1C. LUANDA 1121

1D. LUANDA 1126

11. (U) Summary: Deputy Commander EUCOM, General William (Kip) Ward, proposed the drafting of a work plan to increase the pace and scope of bilateral military cooperation between the U.S. and Angola during his October 22-23, 2006, visit to Luanda. The work plan will likely combine current cooperation initiatives with U.S.-proposals for the ACOTA and State Partnership programs and may include Angolan requests for increased assistance in the destruction of small arms, promotion of coastal security, English language training, and health programs. The Angolans agreed to the work plan proposal, though they have not yet agreed to specific elements of that plan such as ACOTA or the State Partnership programs. Embassy Luanda will write the first draft by the end of December, clearing through EUCOM, State, and DOD, and will forward to the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) soliciting its input and approval.

12. (U) Ward's visit received wide and positive media coverage. The press accurately reported Ward's intention to improve the bilateral military relationship, offer capacity assistance to the FAA, and forge positive personal relationships with Angolan counterparts. Ward met with Chief of the Armed Forces General Agostinho Nelumba Sanjar, Minister of Defense Kundi Paihama, Acting President of Parliament Joao Lourenco, and with American company representatives from Chevron, Esso, and Haliburton. He was accompanied by Ambassador Efird, EUCOM Political Advisor Ambassador Yates, EUCOM officers, Embassy DATT and Embassy notetaker. Ward's visit was the first by a high-ranking U.S. military officer since the visit of Deputy Commander EUCOM General Wald in early-2004. We look forward to future visits and regard them as extremely valuable in advancing the bilateral relationship. End Summary.

Increasing Mil-Mil Cooperation with Chief of Staff and MOD

13. (U) Generals Ward and Sanjar discussed past, current, and potential future cooperation programs for close to two hours on October 23, 2006. They reviewed the successes of the past year including IMET-funded training programs, ongoing HIV/AIDS cooperation, and the late-2005 Medflag exercise, whose banner still hangs proudly outside the Angolan naval base. Ward proposed accelerating movement on ACOTA and presented the State Partnership program. Sanjar agreed to talk further on ACOTA (see reftel C), eagerly stated the FAA's interest in learning more about the State Partnership

program, and requested further assistance in the safe destruction of small arms, English language training, improvement of coastal security, and the creation of a hygiene and epidemiology center. The epidemiology center would improve FAA capacity to respond to epidemics such as cholera, Marburg virus, and avian flu. In this endeavor, the FAA welcomes both technical training from specialists as well as donations of equipment. Both Ward and Sanjar agreed the best way to advance the entire range of programs was to draft a non-binding work plan. Ward proposed the Embassy and EUCOM undertake the first draft that would then be passed to the Angolans for their comments, input, and eventual approval.

¶4. (U) Sanjar further briefed Ward on the security situation in Cabinda (see reftel B) including regarding FAA security concerns for the upcoming elections in the DR Congo (see reftel A). Sanjar informed Ward that the FAA is making progress in creating two Angolan stand-by peacekeeping (PKO) brigades (one for SADC and one for ECCAS) and plans a third to act as a PKO training brigade. He added that the FAA is open to assistance from the U.S. in additional training and equipment for these forces. Ward, thanking Sanjar for the briefing, emphasized that the U.S. seeks a partnership and fully respects Angolan sovereignty.

¶5. (U) Ward's meeting with Minister of Defense Paihama was cordial, but brief due to the longer than expected meeting with Sanjar. Paihama commented that he agreed with &everything said by Sanjar& and said the &new atmosphere& of bilateral relations marks a good time for forward movement. Noting the Angolans probably have more to ask than to give, Paihama highlighted the importance the GRA places on English language training. He closed the meeting by adding

LUANDA 00001233 002 OF 003

that he would see Ward in Benin at the Gulf of Guinea ministerial where they could discuss further the relationship.

Acting President of Parliament Expresses Interest in US Military Equipment

¶6. (U) Acting President Joao Lourenco, a three-star general, gave Ward a briefing on the structure of parliament and outlined legislative improvements made by the ruling MPLA party. One result, Lourenco claimed, was that the annual budget, which had regularly been passed in the spring of each budget year, was now being approved before the end of December.

¶7. (U) Lourenco asked the US delegation why Angola cannot buy American military equipment. The Ambassador noted that Angola does actually buy American military equipment, but tends to do so through third parties such as the Israelis. The Ambassador added that Angola would be eligible for purchases of many types of US military equipment and that purchasing directly would likely save money. Lourenco also asked how the US will conduct training for the FAA considering that the latter operates former Soviet military hardware. Ward replied that US training is focused on capacity building and the improvement of procedures and management; therefore, it is not equipment-specific.

American Petroleum Company Talk Security, China,

¶8. (U) American company representatives from Chevron, Esso, and Haliburton told Ward, in an informal briefing at the Ambassador's residence, that the greatest risk to future oil security in Angola is political instability. Representatives added that they did not feel they were at great risk under current circumstances. The representatives conceded that their assets are currently defenseless and are therefore soft targets, but rejected comparisons of Angola to Nigeria. Nigeria, they asserted, is a volatile mix of religions and ethnicities, whereas Angola is predominately Catholic with an

emphasis on national identity rather than tribal identity. Angolans, they added, are also exhausted of war, violence, and kidnappings and are currently content to allow a trickle-down approach to distributing the oil wealth.

¶9. (U) Representatives were unconcerned about Chinese involvement in the market. Angolans, they said, are likely to become increasingly hostile to Chinese workers as it becomes apparent the Chinese intend to immigrate rather than stay as temporary guest workers. They added Angola feels overcharged for Chinese unskilled labor with prices approaching that of skilled western expatriate workers. The representatives claimed Angolan perception of western companies benefits from corporate citizenship projects and higher percentages of Angolan labor. For example, 70 percent of Haliburton's workers are Angolan. Nonetheless, representatives noted that obtaining skilled local labor within the country is difficult. Instead, American companies run ongoing recruitment programs abroad hoping to attract the return of Angolans.

¶10. (U) The representatives were cautiously optimistic for the future of Angola. Government investments need to be made in education and health, which the companies themselves are assisting with their corporate responsibility programs. The growth of small and medium-sized enterprises is important, they added, as well as the development of increased manufacturing capability. Creation of a middle class is the real essential to insuring against the risk of political instability.

Comment

¶11. (U) The Ward visit appeared to be an unqualified success. The EUCOM delegation was warmly received by GRA officials; press coverage was positive, accurate, and wide; the FAA was receptive to our offers of new assistance programs and requested more of our current training; and military figures who had previously shown us a cold shoulder were noticeably more receptive. Follow-up on the cooperation work plan is critical to making this apparent success a concrete one.

LUANDA 00001233 003 OF 003

¶12. (U) Quick advances will not come easy, however. Our relationship will likely move forward unevenly due to competing interests within the GRA and the tendency for even routine matters to be relegated to the highest level of decision-making. The FAA prides itself on being one of the most capable militaries on the continent, has aspirations for further professionalization, and recognizes the U.S. has much to offer in this regard. General Ward rightly approached the FAA as an equal, not a junior, partner. Proceeding as partners, and recognizing the FAA's perceptions of its own national interests, we are more likely to be able to forge an effect partnership that leads to better regional security, an increasingly capable and reliable counterterrorism ally, and a potentially active and effective peacekeeping force. End Comment.

¶13. (SBU) Comment. On October 24, 2006, the day after Ward's visit, Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos transferred General Sanjar for his post as FAA chief of Staff to Deputy Minister of Defense responsible for Administration and Finances (reftel D). This move is one of the many personnel actions taken by the President on October 24 and is likely the result of a long-standing request for transfer by Sanjar. The transfer does not change the content of Sanjar's message. End Comment.

¶14. (U) This cable was cleared by the EUCOM Deputy Commander.

EFIRD